

FEBRUARY 18th, 1897.

To THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CASTLEFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Sir.—I have again the pleasure of presenting to you my Annual Report on the Sanitary Condition of your district for the year ending December 31st, 1896, with the accompanying Tables of Statistics A.B.C.

Death Rate. The number of Deaths registered during the year has been 235, viz. 126 Males, and 109 Females. The Death Rate being 13·05 per 1,000 living, this being the lowest Death Rate for the district within my recollection. The Death Rate for the previous year being 16·59, and for 1894 14·31

Birth Rate. The number of Births registered during the same period was 560, viz: 277 Males, and 283 Females, the Birth Rate being 31·1 per 1,000 living, the Birth Rate for the previous year being 37·35.

Out of the total number of Births, 14 or, 2·5 per cent. were illegitimate.

Out of the total number of Deaths, 8 or, 3·4 per cent. were uncertified.

The number of Deaths which took place in children under 5 years of age was 129, being nearly 55 per cent. of the total number of Deaths, and at the rate of 7·16 per 1,000 living.

Of these 129 Deaths, 91 took place in Infants under 1 year, being 38 per cent. of the whole, and at the rate of 5·05 per 1,000 living.

The number of Deaths which took place in persons between 5 and 25 years of age was 18; between 25 and 60 years of age, 48; over 60 years of age, 40, while of these 15 were over 70, and 6 of these were over 80 years of age.

Zymotics. The number of Deaths which have taken place from Zymotic diseases is 18, viz: 3 from Diphtheria, 3 from Measles, 3 from Scarlet Fever, 8 from Diarrhoea, and 1 from Fever. 15 of these taking place in children under 5 years of age, and 3 in persons over 5. These Deaths are 7·6 per cent. of the total number of deaths and give a death rate of 1 per 1,000 living, the Zymotic death rate for the previous year being 3·4 per 1,000.

There has been no case of Small Pox reported in your district during the past year.

Measles is not one of the diseases notifiable in this district, but I have had 3 Deaths reported to me from this cause, 2 in October, and 1 in December. The 2 cases in October both occurring in Armitage Street off Wilson Street. On making enquiries I found there were a few cases in this district, but no great prevalence.

When the case was reported in December, the schools were about being closed for the holidays, and this fact may have been the reason of the disease not spreading, for I heard nothing further until the middle of January, when 2 more deaths were reported to me. I at once ascertained from the school attendance officer that only 10 children were reported absent from school from this cause therefore I have not thought it necessary to interfere with school attendance but in the event of it spreading to any extent I shall feel compelled to close the schools for a short period.

Scarlet Fever. Scarlet Fever has been more or less prevalent in your district during the whole year, 76 cases having been notified to me as compared with 37 during the previous year. These cases occurred 10 in the 1st Quarter, 23 in the 2nd, 17 in the 3rd, and 26 in the last Quarter. At no time did it assume a severe form only 3 deaths having taken place. Two of these cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital at Glass Houghton, the first being in the family of the Caretaker of the Wheldon Lane Schools, when by removing the whole of his family to the Hospital and placing the man himself in Quarantine for a few days he was enabled to continue his duties without risk to children attending that school. The other case removed occurred in a child brought from Scotland for Xmas, who developed Scarlatina the day after arrival. In this case also the whole family were removed, and kept Isolated till fit to return home.

Whooping Cough. No death from Whooping Cough has been reported during the year.

Diphtheria. There have been 3 cases of Diphtheria notified to me during the year, all of which terminated fatally. In these cases, with the help of the Nuisance Inspector, I endeavoured to trace the cause but was unable to find any Insanitary condition about the premises sufficient to account for them.

Typhoid. Under the head of Fever there have been 8 cases notified to me, and in each case I have endeavoured to ascertain the cause. One case of Typhoid Fever in Dixon's Row, which proved fatal, was attributed by the patient to having had a bad smell at the Privy. Two cases of Typhoid Fever which occurred in Wheldon Lane were of a mild type, and near a man-hole, the sewer gas from which may have been the cause. A severe case of Relapsing Fever took place in a house where there was a direct communication from the drain to the kitchen, this was at once remedied.

Diarrhoea. There have been 8 Deaths due to Diarrhoea registered during the year, 7 of these taking place in children under 5 years of age, and 1 in an adult. This is a great improvement on the figures for the previous year, when 38 Deaths were due to this cause.

In addition to the above mentioned cases of Infectious disease notified to me there have also been 12 cases of Erysipelas, 1 of Puerperal Fever, and 1 of Membranous Croup, making in all 101 cases notified to me during the year. In this connection I will again mention the desirability of including Whooping Cough amongst the diseases requiring notification, as though no death has been reported to me, at the present time there are cases in the district, and it may at any time assume an epidemic form, and we know from past experience how very fatal a serious epidemic of this disease is, it being within my recollection when your district had very little more than half its present population, there were 21 Deaths registered from this disease in one year.

Diseases of the respiratory organs have given rise to 56 Deaths including 17 from Phthisis.

Water Supply. The Water Supply has been a few times during the year interfered with, and the district has been entirely without water for some hours, to remedy this state of things for the future, I would suggest that the Council at once take steps to provide Storage capacity for at least 24 hours. This would also be a means of preventing the excessive waste which takes place when the water is turned on again owing to its muddy condition.

The statistics of the Sanitary Work done, will be found on Table C. I have made periodical Inspections of the whole of the district, and special Inspections in some cases of Infectious Disease, and all cases that have been notified have been supplied with disinfectants, and the premises in connection attended to.

Slaughter House. I would suggest for the consideration of the Council the question of Public Slaughterhouse, for although those at present in existence are well attended to, no matter how well kept they must still be a nuisance and annoyance to people resident in *the* immediate neighbourhood.

Lodging House. The Lodging-Houses have been regularly inspected and kept in satisfactory condition.

Street Improvement. Street Improvements should also be taken in hand by the Council, for the better preservation of the Public Health, for many of the streets in rainy weather are more like mud lanes, and well nigh impassible, such as Catlow Street, Nicholson Street, Regent Street, Beancroft Street, Roundhill Road, and Queen Street.

The Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milk Shops have been periodically inspected and found in a satisfactory condition.

The Ashpits have been emptied, on an average, 5 times during the year.

During the months of July and August, special attention was paid to the flushing of House Drains and Gulleys, and Disinfectants were freely used.

Twelve Houses have been stoved after Scarlet Fever.

Signed, E. WALKER KEMP,

Medical Officer of Health.

